

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
GALVESTON DIVISION

DEMOND P. SHEPARD, # 1043311 §
§
V. § CIVIL ACTION NO. G-05-340
§
DOUG DRETKE, DIRECTOR, §
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL §
JUSTICE, INSTITUTIONAL DIVISION. §

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Before the Court is the application of Demond P. Shepard for the issuance of a writ of habeas corpus. Shepard challenges disciplinary case number **20040245549**, in which he was found guilty of attempting to assault an officer and punished with a temporary loss of commissary privileges; forty-five days cell restriction; a reduction in time-earning class status from L1 to L-3; confinement in close instead of medium custody; and, a loss of 365 days good time.

State prisoners seeking federal court review of a conviction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254 must assert a violation of a federal constitutional right. *Lawrence v. Lensing*, 42 F.3d 255, 258 (5th Cir. 1994); *Gray v. Lynn*, 6 F.3d 265, 268 (5th Cir. 1993). In the context of disciplinary proceedings, habeas corpus procedures are appropriate when the allegations concern punishment which may ultimately affect the length of an inmate's confinement. See *Cook v. Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice Transitional Planning Dept.*, 37 F.3d 166, 168 (5th Cir. 1994); *Serio v. Members of the La. State Bd. Of Pardons*, 821 F.2d 1112 (5th Cir. 1987). In the instant case, Petitioner alleges that his due process rights were violated during the course of the above-cited disciplinary proceeding. Due to the nature of Petitioner's underlying conviction, however, Petitioner is not eligible for the protections afforded by the Due Process Clause.

Petitioner states in his Petition that he was imprisoned in 2000 due to a burglary of a habitation conviction out of Harris County. Statutory law specifically states that an inmate may not be released to mandatory supervision if the inmate is serving a sentence for, *inter alia*, a first degree felony under § 30.02, Penal Code (burglary of a habitation).¹ As it appears that Petitioner is not eligible for mandatory release, the loss of good time does not affect the duration of his sentence and does not, therefore, trigger due process protections. *See Sandin v. Conner*, 515 U.S. 472, 483-84 (1995); *Madison v. Parker*, 104 F.3d 765, 767 (5th Cir. 1997).

To the extent Petitioner's claims are interpreted to assert that the challenged disciplinary proceeding will adversely affect his eligibility for parole, he still has not stated a claim that invokes due process. While procedures relative to parole may affect his duration of confinement, it is well settled that the Texas parole statutes do not confer a liberty interest. "It follows that because [the petitioner] has no liberty interest in obtaining parole in Texas, he cannot complain of the constitutionality of procedural devices attendant to parole decisions." *Orellana v. Kyle*, 65 F.3d 29, 32 (5th Cir. 1995), *cert. denied*, 516 U.S. 1059 (1996). Therefore, to whatever extent the challenged disciplinary proceeding affects Petitioner's eligibility for parole, his due process rights have not been violated. Petitioner has failed to state a claim that is cognizable under federal habeas review. *See Madison*, 104 F.3d at 767; *Sandin*, 515 U.S. at 483-484.

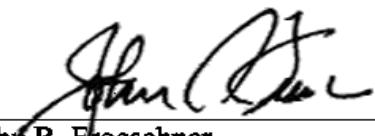
Accordingly, for the aforementioned reasons, it is the **RECOMMENDATION** of this Court that this cause be DISMISSED for failure to state a claim upon which federal habeas relief is available.

The Clerk shall send copies of this Report and Recommendation to the Petitioner by the means in place for transmission of same. The Petitioner shall have until **July 13, 2005**, in which to have written objections physically on file in the Office of the Clerk. If Petitioner believes that the Court has

¹ *See* V.T.C.A, Government Code, § 508.149(a)(13).

misconstrued the nature of the conviction for which he was incarcerated, he must so state in his objections. The objections shall be mailed to the Clerk's Office in Galveston, Texas 7753 at P.O. Drawer 2300. Any objections filed shall be contained in a written document specifically entitled "Objections to the Report and Recommendation of the Magistrate Judge", which will then be forwarded to the District Judge for consideration. Failure to file written objections within the prescribed time shall bar an aggrieved party from attacking on appeal the proposed factual findings and legal conclusions accepted by the District Judge, except upon grounds of plain error.

DONE at Galveston, Texas, this the 22nd day of June, 2005.



John R. Froeschner
United States Magistrate Judge